



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Commissioner for Patents
United States Patent and Trademark Office
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

SCHWEGMAN, LUNDBERG &
WOESSNER/WMS GAMING
P.O. BOX 2938
MINNEAPOLIS MN 55402

COPY MAILED

JAN 14 2009

OFFICE OF PETITIONS

In re Application of

Blackburn, et al.

Application No. 10/796,553

Filed: March 8, 2004

Attorney Docket No. 1842.026US1

DECISION ON PETITION

This is a decision on the petition to withdraw the holding of abandonment under 37 CFR 1.181(a), filed January 7, 2009.

The petition is **granted**.

This application was held abandoned July 17, 2008, after no reply was received to the non-final Office action mailed April 16, 2008. The notice set a shortened statutory period for reply of three month from its mailing date. No response was received within the allowable period and the application became abandoned on July 17, 2008. A Notice of Abandonment was mailed November 7, 2008. The instant petition was filed on January 7, 2008. Petitioner maintains that the notice of April 16, 2008, was never received and provides a copy of the relevant docketing calendar as proof of the same.

When, as in this case petitioner is arguing that an Office communication was not received, petitioner must establish non-receipt of the Office communication in accordance with section 711.03(c) of the *Manual of Patent Examining Procedure* that requires the following:

To minimize costs and burdens to practitioners and the Office, the Office has modified the showing required to establish nonreceipt of an Office action. The showing required to establish nonreceipt of an Office communication must include a statement from the practitioner describing the system used for recording an Office action received at the correspondence address of record with the USPTO. The statement should establish that the docketing system is sufficiently reliable. It is expected that the record would include, but not be limited to, the application number, attorney docket number, the mail date of the Office action and the due date for the response.

Practitioner must state that the Office action was not received at the correspondence address of record, and that a search of the practitioner's record(s), including any file jacket or the equivalent, and the application contents, indicates that the Office action was not received. A copy of the record(s) used by the practitioner where the non-received Office action would have been entered had it been received is required.

10/796,553

A copy of the practitioner's record(s) required to show non-receipt of the Office action should include the master docket for the firm. That is, if a three month period for reply was set in the nonreceived Office action, a copy of the master docket report showing all replies docketed for a date three months from the mail date of the nonreceived Office action must be submitted as documentary proof of nonreceipt of the Office action. If no such master docket exists, the practitioner should so state and provide other evidence such as, but not limited to, the following: the application file jacket; incoming mail log; calendar; reminder system; or the individual docket record for the application in question.

Petitioner has met the burden of proof as established by Section 711.03(c)(II) of the MPEP. The holding of abandonment is, therefore, withdrawn.

The application file is being forwarded to Technology Center 2400, GAU 2445 for further processing that may include remailing the non-final Office action and resetting of the period for reply. It is noted that petitioner filed a response to the non-final Office action on January 7, 2009. The Technology Center may determine that re-mailing of the non-final Office action is not necessary and treat the amendment filed January 7, 2009. Question regarding the entry of the amendment should be directed to the Technology Center.

Questions concerning this decision should be directed to the undersigned at (571) 272-3222.



Kenya A. McLaughlin
Petitions Attorney
Office of Petitions